

**WOMEN'S WORK:
INCORPORATING FEMALES INTO THE UNITED STATES MILITARY
STRATEGY TO CONTAIN AND DEGRADE BOKO HARAM**

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Strategic Studies

by

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN'S WORK: INCORPORATING FEMALES INTO THE UNITED STATES MILITARY STRATEGY TO CONTAIN AND DEGRADE BOKO HARAM, by Major Katie M. Martinez, 70 pages.

Boko Haram is currently one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations. Despite a multinational effort to contain and degrade Boko Haram, the terrorist organization continues to demonstrate growing operational capabilities and resiliency. One recent significant shift in Boko Haram's tactics is the incorporation and use of women in their organization to help perpetuate terrorist acts. What is the U.S.'s current military strategy to counter Boko Haram? What role do women have in the Boko Haram organization? How have females previously been used to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram? What was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism? If the U.S. does incorporate females into its military strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on the DoD? These questions will be explored and answered to support or rebut the incorporation of females into the U.S.'s military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

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My most important source of support this year came from my family. Being dual military with two young kids it quickly became apparent that it was only feasible for one of us to complete an MMAS. My husband Marcos graciously set aside his own desire to pursue an MMAS and allowed me all the time I needed to think, research, and write my thesis. While there was a lot less time with mom this year, our boys never complained when I had to go spend the day in the library. Their resiliency and positive outlook on life kept me motivated to see this through to completion. I will be forever grateful to Marcos, Raylan and Asher for supporting me as I completed this thesis.

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ACRONYMS

AFRICOM	United States African Command
CST	Cultural Support Team
DoD	Department of Defense
DOTMLPF-P	Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Personnel, Facilities, Policies
FET	Female Engagement Team
FINER	Feasible, Interesting, Novel, Ethical and Relevant
MNJTF	Multinational Joint Task Force
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSS	National Security Strategy
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Women, our blood and treasure, are serving on the front lines right now.
— 1st AD Deputy Commanding General

Appalling, horrific, and gruesome are just a few of the adjectives used to describe the atrocities committed by Boko Haram. Designated by the U.S. State Department as a foreign terrorist organization in 2013, Boko Haram ranks as one of the world's deadliest terrorist organizations (Economics and Peace 2015). The kidnapping of over 276 school girls in 2014 by Boko Haram led to a robust multi-national counterterrorism effort. The containment and degradation of Boko Haram remains a top U.S. African Command (AFRICOM) priority. However, despite these efforts, Boko Haram has continued to demonstrate growing operational capabilities and resiliency. This Islamic extremist group is predominately active in north-east Nigeria, as depicted in figure 1. This group shows no signs of ceasing its deadly attacks aimed at terrorizing civilians and destabilizing governments.



Figure 1. Boko Haram's Primary Area of Activity

Source: University of Texas Perry-Castaneda Library Map collection, modified by author.

To aid in the multinational counterterrorism effort, a Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) was established in Nigeria in 2013. This task force has experienced success in targeting and arresting male members of Boko Haram. Historically, Boko Haram has specifically targeted women as victims of their terrorist activities. However, there have been recent reports of Boko Haram using women to employ terrorist acts, such as suicide bombing. This shift in Boko Haram's strategy to incorporate women into their operations has been a result of the Multinational Joint Task Force's success (Zenn and Pearson 2014, 49). Boko Haram's increased focus on incorporating women into its strategy has not yet been met with a shift in U.S. military strategy to counter these

evolved tactics. To successfully contain and degrade Boko Haram, it is imperative the U.S. include effective methods in its military strategy for dealing with emerging tactics, like the use of women to conduct attacks.

Primary Research Question

Given the continued evolution of Boko Haram, despite counterterrorism efforts, it is apparent that changes to U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade this terrorist organization should be explored. In the past ten years, the U.S. military has used females in areas affected by a terrorist organization and where cultural norms have presented challenges with male troops engaging the female population with varied success. Reports of Boko Haram's employment of women to perform terrorist acts highlight a potential need to incorporate women as part of counterterrorism efforts. For example, Female Engagement Teams (FET) have contributed to the counterterrorism fight in Afghanistan and Iraq. Similar employment of females may add value to the U.S. military strategy against Boko Haram. However, females are not currently incorporated in the U.S.'s military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. This leads to the primary research question that this thesis seeks to answer: "Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?"

Secondary Research Questions

To adequately answer the primary research question, "Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?" there are several secondary research questions that must be answered. Answering these

questions is critical for a logical progression in the assessment of the current U.S. military strategy to Boko Haram, and identifying areas of improvement.

The secondary questions considered in this thesis are:

1. What is the U.S.'s current military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?
2. What role do women have in the Boko Haram organization?
3. How have females previously been used to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram?
4. What was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism?
5. If the U.S. does incorporate females into its military strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on the DoD?

Answering these secondary questions, in a sequential manner, will provide the researcher with adequate information to answer the primary research question, draw conclusions, and making recommendations.

Assumptions

Assumptions are ideas or concepts that the researcher believes to be true and identification of assumptions are necessary to continue planning or research. There are three assumptions made for the purposes of this study. First, the study assumes that West Africa, specifically Nigeria, lacks the capabilities and ability to successfully contain and degrade Boko Haram without assistance from the U.S. military. A follow-on assumption to this is that Nigeria is receptive to U.S. military assistance to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Third, the use of females in West Africa would have a similar impact in the fight against Boko Haram as it has previously had on other counterterrorism efforts. These

assumptions, made by the researcher, are necessary to organize the research in a manner that effectively answers the primary research question.

Definitions and Terms

The following key terms and definitions are given to provide the reader with clarity and a common understanding of terms and concepts used throughout this thesis.

Counterinsurgency: Comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes (Department of Defense 2016, 56).

Counterterrorism: Activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks in order to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals (Department of Defense 2016, 57).

Cultural Support Team: Cultural support teams are comprised of female Soldiers who serve as enablers supporting Army special operations combat forces in and around secured objective areas. Their primary task is to engage the female populations in an objective area when such contact may be deemed culturally inappropriate if performed by a male servicemember (SORB 2013).

Female Engagement Team: All volunteer female team of appropriate rank, experience, and maturity whose mission is to engage with female members of a community (McCullough 2012). Formed due to cultural restrictions which prohibit women from interacting with men.

Strategy: A prudent idea or set of ideas for employing the instruments of national power in a synchronized and integrated fashion to achieve theater, national, and/or multinational objectives (Department of Defense 2016, 224).

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations and delimitations are the factors that limit the scope of research and analysis. Limitations are identified potential weak points in the research process. One limitation of this study is that the research is limited to unclassified materials. This limitation restricts the scope and possibly excludes valuable information from the researcher's literature review and analysis. Another limitation is the relatively small amount of quantifiable data analyzing the effect that prior use of females had on combating terrorist organizations. This could lead to a less detailed assessment of the impact females have had on combating terrorist organizations.

Delimitations, which can be self-imposed, are the set parameters which direct the focal point of the thesis. The title and primary research question refer to the overall U.S. military strategy because current operations in West Africa are centered on a joint environment. The main delimitation of this study is that the proposed change to strategy focuses solely on the U.S. Military's role in the U.S. strategy. Another delimitation is that only one change to the U.S. military strategy is explored.

Army Warfighting Challenge

Army Warfighting Challenges are a set of enduring problems that serve as an analytical framework to help guide the focus and development of the future force (ARCIC 2017, 1). This study aligns with Army Warfighting Challenge number two:

shape the security environment. Answering this study's primary research question, "Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?" will provide insight into how Geographic and Functional Combatant Commands can influence security environments, and engage key actors to achieve desired security outcomes.

Chapter Conclusion

The ongoing deadly threat posed by Boko Haram coupled with their change in tactics have led to the development of the primary research question, "Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?" Chapter 2 will review available literature pertinent to this topic, structured around the secondary research questions:

The secondary questions considered in this thesis are:

1. What is the U.S.'s current strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?
2. What role do women have in the Boko Haram organization?
3. How have females previously been used to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram?
4. What was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism?
5. If the U.S. does incorporate females into its military strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on the DoD?

The results of this literature review will be further analyzed in Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Analysis. This analysis will be used to answer the secondary research questions. Answering the secondary research questions with an analysis of the results of a

systematic literature review is critical to successfully answering the primary research question.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Introduction

A comprehensive review of the literature is required to sufficiently answer the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” The purpose of this literature review is to provide the “basic rationale for the research” (Galvan 2006, 13). Additionally, it will highlight any gaps in the existing body of knowledge and validate that this research has not previously been performed. The search tools used to identify relevant literature include electronic databases such as JSTOR and Google Scholar, as well as a search request submitted to a reference librarian. Search terms related to the primary and secondary research questions were used to narrow the results of the literature search.

The first goal of this literature review is to establish the necessary legal authority to legitimize incorporation of females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Establishing the legal authority will be done with a review of accepted case law relevant to this topic. Once legal authority is established, literature pertaining to the secondary research questions will be reviewed.

Legal Authority

Prior to answering the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” it is first necessary to establish the legal authority to do so. Legal authority is established by reviewing current U.S. laws that pertain to U.S. military strategy and the use of females

to combat terrorism. Based on a review of these laws, the legal authority of the U.S. to incorporate females into its military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram will be determined.

A review of U.S. laws determined that Public Law Number 114-266 was signed into law on December 14, 2016. This law requires Department of State and the Department of Defense to develop a five-year strategy to counter Boko Haram within 180 days of enactment of the law. One of the requirements of the strategy is to identify the resources required to achieve the specified objectives (U.S. Congress 2017). Answering the primary research question “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” will help fulfill this legal requirement. Previously, the combat exclusion of females restricted the use of females as part of the military strategy to combat terrorist organizations (Erwin 2012, 6). The lifting of the Combat Exclusion Policy on January 24, 2013 provides legal basis for inclusion of females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

Is the use of females as part of a military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram legal? Based on a review of the laws, the answer is yes. Incorporating females into U.S.’s military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram is legal.

What is the Current U.S. Military Strategy to Combat Boko Haram?

On March 8th, 2016, General David M. Rodriguez delivered AFRICOM’s posture statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Per his posture statement, due to Boko Haram’s continued growth, containing and degrading Boko Haram remains a top AFRICOM priority. To counter this growth, the U.S. has increased security engagements, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and support provided to Nigeria, as well as

neighboring countries of Chad, Niger, and Cameroon (Rodriguez 2016, 8-10). The U.S. also financially supports the regional MNJTF which is focused on countering Boko Haram (U.S. Department of State 2016).

So far, the MNJTF has experienced only marginal success in combating Boko Haram. The pressure from targeting male members of the terrorist organization has caused Boko Haram to change tactics to incorporate the use of female suicide bombers in their operations. With this change in tactics Boko Haram continues to perpetuate violence in the West Africa region (U.S. Department of State 2015). Boko Haram has expanded its activities in the region, capitalizing on opportunities in areas which are unstable such as Cameroon. In response, the U.S. has expanded the number of security training programs it provides to assist these areas (U.S. Department of State 2015). There have also been two recent deployments of U.S. troops, once in 2014 and once in 2015, to counter Boko Haram (Thurston 2015). In 2016, the state department reported that it expected more troops will be deployed to the region soon (Thomas-Greenfield 2016). The primary role of the military in these deployments is to provide intelligence to assist the area governments in their degradation and defeat of Boko Haram (Thomas-Greenfield 2016). However, current initiatives to leverage the knowledge and influence women in the West Africa region are limited to the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

The U.S. Department of State's strategy to counter Boko Haram is to focus on aiding Nigeria and neighboring countries in their fight against Boko Haram. The U.S. Department of State's strategy has six areas of focus: enhance affected countries' efforts against Boko Haram, weaken Boko Haram, enhance efforts to engage civilians affected

by Boko Haram, counter and prevent extremism violence, remove underlying causes of insecurity, and address humanitarian issues caused by Boko Haram (Thomas-Greenfield 2016). Critical to the implementation of the U.S. Department of State's strategy to counter Boko Haram is the financial support provided to the MNJTF. Additionally, the U.S. Department of State relies heavily on the involvement of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for a large amount of support of the U.S. strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

The USAID is the primary government agency that works to foster the civil capacity of foreign nations. The agency's mission is to "partner to end extreme poverty and to promote resilient, democratic societies while advancing our security and prosperity" The role that USAID plays in the U.S.'s strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram is primarily focused on promoting stability in the region. To accomplish this, humanitarian assistance and development assistance are provided, geared toward long term recovery (USAID 2017). The USAID also maintains a focus on the provision and improvement of education provided in the region. The efforts of USAID are critical to the success of U.S. strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram (Thomas-Greenfield 2016). The strategic focus of these efforts is centered on enabling countries in the region to combat Boko Haram by eliminating the root causes of terrorism.

Also, tied in with U.S. strategy and the USAID's initiatives, the U.S. Institute of Peace recently conducted a pilot program in Nigeria to counter extreme violence. This program was titled *Women Preventing Extremist Violence*. This program focused on connecting women in Nigeria with the ongoing efforts of the Nigerian security sector. This program was conducted to further research causes of violent extremism and explore

potential strategies to leverage local females to help prevent future violence. The results of this program were presented to the U.S. in July 2015 (U.S. Institute of Peace 2017). However, there is no further unclassified literature available to show that leveraging females has been incorporated into any aspect of the U.S.'s strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. This thesis will demonstrate the potential value in the addition of female specific roles with the U.S. military strategy to complement the current operations of the State Department and USAID.

What Influence and Role do Women Have in the Boko Haram Organization?

Organized insurgent and terrorist organizations throughout the world have used female participation to varying degrees. Women have been known to serve in diverse levels of active and supportive positions. Previously, female's roles within these organizations been overlooked by researchers and identified as those simply filled by wives, sisters, and mothers (Erwin 2012, 6). As terrorist groups continue to incorporate females as active participants into their organizations, there is a growing need to address the issue in strategies to counter these terrorist organizations.

Boko Haram focuses on imposing a version of Sharia law with a very strict gendered ideology (Onuoha 2010). Women are subjected to discrimination and abuses such as flogging for fornication, strict dress codes and segregation in school. However, in comparison to the targeting of Christian women, Muslim women historically have been spared from further violence by the group. An example of this is the 2014 attack by Boko Haram on a state college in Nigeria in which women were spared but the men were killed (Nossiter 2014).

Due to the gender norms and roles within Boko Haram's ideology, women were not initially used as part of their terrorist operations. However, recent efforts to contain and degrade Boko Haram have led to mass arrests and targeting of counterterrorism operations to focus on the male members of Boko Haram (Iaccino 2014). With the male members of Boko Haram becoming increasingly vulnerable to anti-terrorist operations of the Multi National Joint Task Force, the group has shifted their tactics and started to include women in their operations.

Over the past five years there have been numerous reports of Boko Haram increasingly using females as part of their operations (Zenn and Pearson 2014; Onuoha and George 2015, 2). Females do not attract as much attention nor raise as much suspicion as males tend to and can move about more freely and undetected. A recent report, based on interviews with former members of Boko Haram, indicates that women are increasingly likely to be involved in fighting, recruiting, and intelligence operations (Guilbert 2016). Boko Haram's inclusion of females as active participants within the organization has evolved to a point where the group has a "female wing" (BBC 2014).

The group has also been successful in turning kidnapped girls and women into suicide bombers, and has used at least 105 females in suicide bombing attacks since June 2014 (Searcey 2016). While some women are forced into the suicide bomber role, there are also reports of women actively and willingly taking part in the group's terrorist related activities (Oduah 2016; Onuoha and George 2015, 6). In addition to females attracting less attention, they also wear the hijab and other full body covering garments which provide more concealment for bombs and other materials. Women are used in

various capacities within the organization, from perpetuating terror attacks to recruiting additional members (Zenn and Pearson 2014).

Boko Haram has experienced success at continuing to conduct its terrorist activities by incorporating women. This change in tactics to focus more on female involvement has aided the group tremendously in overcoming counterterrorism efforts which currently focus on fighting-aged males. The literature indicates that given the success of using females to inflict terror in the region, the group will continue to do so for the near future. This thesis will demonstrate the potential value in the addition of female specific roles with the U.S. military strategy to effectively counter Boko Haram's recent use of females to perpetuate their terrorist activities.

How Have Females Previously been Used to Combat Terrorist Organizations Like Boko Haram?

Females have been used in both Iraq and Afghanistan to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram. Females were first used to aid in combating terrorism in 2003. An ad hoc division of Army and Marine women was created in response to difficulties encountered by American forces when interacting with the Iraqi female population (Erwin 2012, 10). These units were called lioness teams.

Lioness teams were initially just focused on addressing the difficulties male Marine members faced interacting with women due to cultural norms. They initially primarily assisted with home searches and check points, and their focus was primarily tactical (McLagan and Sommers 2010). Due to their necessity and success, the lioness program spawned evolutions of more formalized teams. Two of the most commonly used

arrangements to support the employment of females to counterterrorism have been the Female Engagement Teams (FET) and Cultural Support Teams (CST).

Female Engagement Teams consist of women who are formally trained and have been used by both the Army and the Marines. The first FET was created in 2009 by the Marines, with a role that was expanded from that of the Lioness teams (Jones 2013, 5). The purpose of these FETs was to build the local population's trust in U.S. operations and enable maneuver units to interact in an influential manner with the local population. They accomplished this by persistent engagement with the local population, focused primarily on women and children (Jones 2013, 5; Erwin 2012, 10). An estimated 70 search missions and engagement missions were conducted by Marine FETs in the period from July to December 2009 (CALL 2011, 4.). Although some FETs were used in Iraq, the preponderance of focus for FETs was Afghanistan (Mattson 2012, 16). Reportedly, there was an appreciable lack of training and understanding of the FET mission that contributed to the underutilization of these teams (Mehra 2010, 25). Marine FETs ceased their operations in 2012, only to revive the teams in 2015 (Seck 2015). Army FET are being employed less frequently and in a less formalized manner, signaling the probable end to their use (Owen 2015). Although identifying the need for female engagement to combat terrorism, the Army was slow to formalize FETs. In 2011, the Army established a formal FET program, assigning FETs to Brigade Combat Teams outside of Special Forces operations (CALL 2011, 9). Army FETs are structured similar to Marine FETs, and functioned with similar missions to engage the local female population.

Cultural support teams were developed in 2010 by Special Operations Command. In contrast to FETs, the purpose of CSTs was to enable the special operations forces in

the engagement of a nation's female population. The main difference between the FETs and CSTs is that the members of CSTs are selected and trained by Army Special Forces to better enable the CSTs to support special operations missions (Jones 2013, 5). In addition to enabling the Special Forces mission by helping to overcome cultural norms, part of the CSTs training and role focused on gathering intelligence on enemy location and activity (Peghi 2015).

The U.S. military has used females to aid in combating terrorist organizations for over ten years. The mission, structure, and function of these teams has evolved over time. How the mission, structure and function of these teams contributed to the counterterrorism fight over the years is explored in this thesis.

What Was the Impact of Previously Using Females to Counter Terrorism?

As described above, females have been used to augment counterterrorism efforts in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Due to the varied ways in which they are incorporated into military strategy, there is a small amount of quantifiable data available detailing their success. However, there are numerous anecdotal reports available to review to assess the impact of using females to counterterrorism.

The Lioness program was incredibly successful and led to the U.S. Military's recognition of the importance of establishing trust and communication with the female populations. Lioness teams contributed to greatly improving security by interacting with a segment of the population that was previously difficult for male Marine members to interact with. Additionally, the Lioness teams began to interact with a group of Iraqi women to promote local assistance with their own security (Beals 2010, 8). Due to the

initial success, the U.S. military continued to leverage females to counterterrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan (Kem 2011, 3). As the lioness teams continued to experience success, the Marines formalized these teams into FETs.

The first use of the FET, in 2009, was so successful that by the end of the year, all units were required to generate such teams. In addition to assisting with security, building trust and overcoming gender barriers presented by cultural norms, there have been numerous anecdotal reports that FETs provided other benefits by intelligence gathering and information dissemination (Macak 2010, 11; Beals 2010, 9). It has been noted that engagement of women in both Iraq and Afghanistan has shown that the women in the society can be sources of information about a regions social construct and help identify local insurgents which can be critical to the intelligence gathering of U.S. forces conducting counterterrorism operations (Anderson 2017). Reportedly FETs used in Iraq were successful in swaying the support of family units and communities which initially supported al-Qaida (Nelson 2009; Kilcullen 2006, 7).

One notable discovery from the use of FETs was that the women had significant influence over the men in the community (Broadwell 2009). This was an assumption that did not seem to be previously held about the Afghan culture. Author Anna Coll conducted a study in which she assessed the effectiveness of FETs using a model that she developed. Applying her model to the anecdotal data available, she found that FETs have been successful at accessing and engaging the population. Interestingly, FETs have also been successful at interacting with the local male population as well. In addition to engaging the local population, FETs have also gathered valuable intelligence that has further enabled operations (Coll 2015, 18-25).

Cultural Support Teams were also successful at both enabling the Special Forces Mission as well as intelligence gathering and information dissemination to further enable operations. There are several reports where CST members received critical insurgent location information because of their engagement with the Afghan female population (Lemmon 2015a). The Cultural Support Teams contributed to the success of night raids, by providing intelligence gathered from Afghan females. The addition of these teams was critical to the success of many Special Operation missions (Bowen 2015).

Although most feedback has been positive, there have been some anecdotal reports that are more critical of FETs and CSTs. One survey revealed that these teams have been underutilized and that commanders do not have a full understanding of how to incorporate the capability into their operations (Medeiros 2012, 9). Some reports indicate that the effectiveness of using females to combat terrorism has been reduced due to insufficient training, lack of resources, and coordination (Jones 2013, 31). When the incorporation of females has not been successful, lack of sufficient integration into the U.S. counterinsurgency strategy has been noted as a significant contributing factor (Cook 2015). However, despite these drawbacks, the overall assessment of FETs and CSTs effectiveness has been primarily positive. This thesis will demonstrate the potential value in the addition of female specific roles, like the FETs and CSTs, with the U.S.'s military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

Implications to National Security

While not specifically a secondary research question, when investigating a potential change to a strategy it is prudent to consider the possible implications to national security. To determine this, a review of AFRICOM's posture statement, the

NSS, NMS and QDR is necessary. Literature from international organizations with which the U.S. actively participates was also reviewed.

Per AFRICOM's posture statement, the continued growth and adaptation of Boko Haram is a top AFRICOM security concern. As part of an effort to address this security concern the U.S. is providing regional security engagements, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance support (Rodriguez 2016, 8-10). Per President Obama and the AFRICOM Commander, Africa remains important to the security and prosperity of the United States (Rodriguez 2016, 19).

The NSS identifies national security concerns and outlines a general approach for the U.S. to take when dealing with these security concerns. The 2015 NSS, issued by President Barak Obama, outlines eight areas of national security focus. Combatting the persistent threat of terrorism is one of the eight areas of focus. The strategic focus for combatting terrorism is "a more sustainable approach that prioritizes targeted counterterrorism operations, collective action with responsible partners" (The President 2015, 9). Also, highlighted in the NSS are addressing inequality and repression, both of which contribute to the growth of violent extremism. To do this, the U.S. will be "supporting alternatives to extremist messaging and greater economic opportunities for women and disaffected youth" (The President 2015, 9). Although the strategic guidance outlined in the NSS is general, the importance of addressing inequality and providing opportunities for women are highlighted as main areas of focus to combat terrorism. More detailed guidance on the implementation of this strategy can be found in subordinate documents, such as the NMS.

The NMS, provided by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, provides the strategic aims of the armed forces. The integration of women across the armed forces is identified in the NMS as a critical factor to building the best possible military (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2015, 14). A key military objective listed in the NMS is to disrupt, degrade, and defeat violent extremist organizations. The U.S. military “must provide a full range of military options for addressing both revisionist states and Violent Extremist Organizations” (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2015, 3). Regional partnerships are also identified as critical to the success of the U.S. military’s response to violent extremist organizations.

The QDR is a Department of Defense review of strategic objectives, programs, and resources conducted every four years. The QDR provides the link between national strategic objectives, and how resources are applied to meet these objectives. According to the QDR, the main regional areas of focus for counterterrorism efforts and resources is to be the middle-east and Africa (Department of Defense 2014a, 12). Additionally, as part of the counterterrorism effort, the Department of Defense will focus on maintaining, and increasing if needed, special operations forces to combat terrorist organizations (Department of Defense 2014a, 21). The potential for rapidly developing threats, particularly in fragile states, including violent public protests and terrorist attacks, could pose acute challenges to U.S. interests (Department of Defense 2014a, 5).

Additional literature review has revealed that the United Nations has formalized the recognition of the role of women in maintaining security and development (UN Security Council 2000). Other international organizations have also identified the critical role that women play in security (World Bank 2012). Additionally, the U.S. State

department has also officially identified the role of females in to combat terrorism and ensure security (U.S. Department of State 2016).

While not explicitly stated, a review of AFRICOM's Posture Statement, NSS, NMS, and QDR and other relevant literature determines that incorporating females into the U.S. military strategy to combat Boko Haram would support national and protect national security interests.

Chapter Conclusion

This literature review provides an overview of the current literature as it pertains to the secondary research questions. Additionally, a review of literature was used to establish legal authority of the U.S. military to incorporate females into its strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Incorporating females into U.S. military strategy would also help advance U.S. National Security. A thorough analysis of the literature presented above, and subsequent answers to the secondary research questions will be offered in chapter 4. The research methodology for this thesis is outlined in the next chapter, chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter Introduction

Two primary research methodologies will be used to answer the secondary research questions and subsequently, the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated as into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” These methods include a literature review and the application of evaluation criteria.

The first method used for this research is a review and qualitative meta-analysis of the literature. A thorough review of current, pertinent literature provides adequate context with which to answer both the primary and secondary research questions. If a literature review and analysis alone is not sufficient to answer the secondary research questions, an answer will be derived using a structured analysis with a set of evaluation criteria. Using the results of the literature review and analysis and the application of evaluation criteria, the secondary research questions will be answered. Finally, based on the answers to the secondary research questions, the primary research question will be answered. Based on the research findings and the answer to the primary research question, conclusions will be drawn and recommendations for future research will be provided.

Evaluation Criteria

Relying solely on a literature review and analysis to provide a simple yes or no answer to the primary and secondary research questions may not be sufficient. When more information is needed to answer a secondary question, evaluation criteria will be

used. The evaluation criteria are developed around the eight elements that The Joint Capabilities Integration Development System uses to develop capabilities. This capability development includes identifying, assessing, and documenting changes in doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities, and policy (DOTMLPF-P) (ACQuipedia 2016).

Evaluation criteria based on a DOTMLPF-P construct will be applied to the secondary research question when a literature review and analysis does not sufficiently answer the question. From the eight DOTMLPF-P elements, a set of questions based on four elements were developed to serve as the evaluation criteria. These four elements were selected based on an analysis of those elements that had the greatest potential to be impacted with the addition of females to the U.S. military strategy against Boko Haram. Table 1 depicts the set of criteria that will be applied. The application of these criteria will lead to a determination of the impact of incorporating females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Each criterion will be addressed individually and then aggregated in chapter 4.

Table 1. DOTMLPF-P Evaluation Criteria			
Criteria	Minimal to no impact (1 point)	Moderate impact (2 points)	Significant impact (3 points)
1) Does incorporating females change our Doctrine?			
2) Does incorporating females change our Organization?			
3) Does incorporating females change our Training?			
4) Does incorporating females change our Leadership?			

Source: Adapted by author from MAJ Sylvan Smith, “If We Don’t, Who Will? The Employment of the United States Army to Combat Potential Pandemic Outbreaks in West Africa” (Master’s thesis, Command and General Staff College, 2015).

Research Methodology

The researcher will be conducting a qualitative study of whether it would be beneficial to incorporate females into U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram using the following stepwise approach:

Step 1: The first step in the research design is to develop and refine the primary research question. The research question will be developed using the FINER criteria (Hulley et al. 2013). The FINER criteria will be applied to determine if the research question was reasonable, interesting, novel, ethical, and relevant.

The feasibility of answering the question will be assessed by asking and answering the following questions: Is the question answerable? Do you have access to all the materials you will need to do the study? Do you have access to enough subjects? Will

you have enough time and money? Do you have the expertise to do this study or can you collaborate with someone who does? To determine if the question is interesting the following questions will be asked: Is the question interesting to the investigator? Is the question interesting to others? To assess whether the research question was novel, two questions will be asked. Has this study been done before? Does it add to the current body of knowledge? To determine if this research is ethical, the following questions will be asked and answered. Can the study be done in a way that does not subject subjects to excess risks? Will an Institutional Review Board approve the study? Finally, to determine the relevancy of the question, one further questions will be answered: Will the results change practice, policy or point towards further avenues of research?

Step 2: The next step in the research design will be to conduct a literature review. The scope of this review will be focused on literature that will allow the researcher to answer the secondary research questions. The results of this literature review are presented in chapter 2 of this thesis. An analysis of the literature review results will be presented in chapter 4 of this thesis.

Step 3: The third step in the research design is to develop an evaluation framework, based on the DOTMLPF-P framework. This framework will consist of evaluation criteria to determine answer to the secondary research question “what was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism?”

Step 4: The fourth step in the research design is to analyze the findings from the application of the DOTMLPF-P based evaluation criteria. This, when combined with the results of the literature review, will provide an answer to the primary research question.

Step 5: The final step will be to draw conclusions from the information aggregated in steps one through three of the research design. Once conclusions are drawn, recommendations for policy makers and future research will be proposed.

Threats to Validity and Biases

Researcher bias is inherent to the research process. In qualitative research, bias can threaten the internal validity and reliability of the results (Garson 2001, 154). This researcher has a personal potential bias as a female military officer. The structured research methodology, presented in this chapter, will allow the researcher to effectively answer the primary research question and minimize biases and threats to validity. Completing the steps in this research design, including the literature review, operational approach development, and the application of DOTMLPF-P based criteria, will provide answers to the secondary research questions. The answers to these questions will be analyzed and the results will shape the answer to the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” Chapter 4 contains an analysis of the data, pertaining to this question, collected for this study.

Chapter Conclusion

Using the described research methodology will allow the researcher to answer the primary research question while minimizing the threats to validity and biases. The literature review and the application of evaluation criteria will result in answers to the secondary research questions. The answers to the secondary research questions will allow the researcher to answer the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated

into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” Chapter 4 presents an analysis of the data collected for this study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Chapter Introduction

Presented in this chapter is an analysis of the data collected to answer the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” The context provided from the literature review coupled with the research methodology yields answers to the secondary research questions as well as the primary research question. A step-wise approach, detailed in chapter 3, is used for data presentation and analysis.

Step 1: Development of the Research Question

The FINER criteria was applied to the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” to determine if the question is feasible, interesting, novel, ethical and relevant.

The feasibility of answering the question was assessed by asking and answering the following questions: Is the question answerable? Yes, with a review of the literature and an adequately constructed research protocol, this question is answerable. Do you have access to all the materials you will need to do the study? Yes, the researcher has access to the necessary databases and research facilities to conduct adequate research to answer this question. Do you have access to enough subjects? There will be no human subjects needed to answer this question. Will you have enough time and money? There will be no monetary cost associated with answering this question. The researcher has approximately eight months to conduct research. Do you have the expertise to do this

study or can you collaborate with someone who does? Although the researchers experience with the subject is limited, the researcher's thesis committee is structured with individuals who have the necessary experience. Based on the answers to each of these questions the researcher determined that the primary research question could be feasibly answered.

To determine if the question was interesting the following questions were asked: Is the question interesting to the investigator? Yes, the researcher is interested in the specific role females could play in U.S. military strategy. Is the question interesting to others? Yes, with the growing role of women in the U.S. military and the ongoing counterterrorism fight, other stakeholders would find this question interesting. Because the answer was yes to both questions, the researcher determined that the primary research question was interesting.

To assess whether the research question was novel, two questions were asked. Has this study been done before? No, the researcher is unable to find where this question has been asked and answered before. Does it add to the current body of knowledge? Yes, this question would add depth to the existing research surrounding female engagement in U.S. strategy to counterterrorism as well as the U.S. military strategy to counter Boko Haram. Based on the answers to these questions, the researcher determined that the primary research question was a novel question.

To determine if this research is ethical, the following questions were asked and answered. Can the study be done in a way that does not subject subjects to excess risks? This study will not involve human or animal subjects. Will an Institutional Review Board approve the study? Because there are no human subjects involved, no Institutional

Review Board approval is needed. The researcher has determined that this study is ethical because it does not use subjects and does not require Institutional Review Board approval.

Finally, to determine the relevancy of the question, one final question was asked and answered: Will the results change practice, policy or point towards further avenues of research? This research has the potential to further U.S. strategy and policy as well as possibly point to further areas of research. Based on the answer to this question the researcher has determined that the primary research question is relevant.

Application of the FINER criteria to the research question affirmed that the primary research question “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” is feasible, interesting, novel, ethical, and relevant. Once it was determined that the primary research question merited investigation, the next step in the research methodology was to conduct the literature review.

Step 2: Results of the Literature Review

To answer the primary research question, “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” five secondary research questions considered in this study. These secondary research questions are:

1. What is the U.S.’s current strategy to counter Boko Haram?
2. What role do women have in the Boko Haram organization?
3. How have females previously been used to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram?
4. What was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism?

5. If the U.S. does incorporate females into its strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on the DoD?

The researcher determined that the first four of these questions can be answered directly from the results of a qualitative literature review.

What is the U.S.'s Current Strategy to Counter Boko Haram?

The first question, “what is the U.S.’s current strategy to counter Boko Haram?” was answered with a review of the *QDR*, *NSS*, *NMS*, AFRICOM’s posture statement, and unclassified Department of State publications. The current U.S. strategy is an integrated interagency endeavor which aids the Nigerian region with the goal of ultimately defeating Boko Haram. This strategy includes U.S. support of a MNJTF, small U.S. troop deployments, and partnership in projects with USAID.

The main effort to counter Boko Haram is a Multinational Joint Task Force. To date, this task force has achieved only marginal success in containing and degrading Boko Haram. Currently, the U.S. provides primarily financial support to this MNJTF (U.S. Department of State 2016). When the MNJTF experienced some success in the targeting of the male members of Boko Haram, the terrorist organization has responded by adapting its tactics and continued to perpetuate violence within the region. Thus, the U.S. further refined its strategy to counter this. This included an increase in the security training programs, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and support provided to the region affected by Boko Haram. (Rodriguez 2016, 8-10; U.S. Department of State 2015).

There have also been two recent deployments of U.S. troops, once in 2014 and once in 2015, to counter Boko Haram, with continued deployments expected (Thurston

2015; Thomas-Greenfield 2016). The primary focus of these troops is to gather and provide intelligence to the regional countries to aid in their fight against Boko Haram. However, in all available unclassified literature there is no mention of incorporation of females into these deployments as part of the strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

Other agencies such as USAID and U.S. Institute of peace are actively involved in combating terrorism in the region. USAID spearheads many initiatives tied to the overall U.S. strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. These initiatives primarily focus on improving the societal and economic hardships that can breed terrorism. Although, the U.S. Institute of Peace recently conducted a pilot program in Nigeria aimed at studying women's role on preventing extreme violence and explore potential strategies tied to this, there is no evidence that this has been incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

An analysis of the available literature reveals that the U.S.'s strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram is a multi-national and multi-agency effort. This strategy is centered on supporting the region by addressing the root causes of instability in the region to reduce the propensity for violent extremism. While there has been an increase in the U.S. intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance provided to Nigeria, initiatives to leverage the knowledge and influence women in the West Africa region are not currently part of the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Given Boko Haram's continued threat in the region despite current efforts, further refinement to current U.S. military strategy is needed.

What Role do Women Have in the Boko Haram Organization?

The next secondary research question, “what role do women have in the Boko Haram organization?” was answered primarily using anecdotal reports. An analysis of available literature reveals that Boko Haram has expanded its incorporation of women into their organization. This is due in large part to the fact that female members are not targeted by the CJTF and can move about more freely and undetected than their male counterparts. Although some women are forced into roles within the group, others are willing participants. These women actively participating in the fighting, recruit both male and female members, and gather intelligence for the group (Guilbert 2016). The growing role of women within the organization has allowed this group to continue to successfully perpetuate violence in the West Africa Region despite efforts to contain and degrade this terrorist organization.

How Have Females Previously been Used to Combat Terrorist Organizations Like Boko Haram?

The third secondary research question, “How have females previously been used to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram?” was answered with a review of the U.S.’s previous use of females to aid in combating terrorist organizations. Incorporation of females, by the U.S. military, into operations in areas affected by a terrorist organization has been done most frequently in Afghanistan. Per the literature, the Marines and the Army had formalized teams of females. These teams were Lioness teams, FETs, and CSTs (Erwin 2012, 10). Females have been used in both Iraq and Afghanistan to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram.

As the teams evolved over time, the role these teams played to combat terrorist organizations expanded. Initially, the role of these teams was focused solely on enabling units to overcome challenges present due to cultural norms. Over time, as these teams began to build relationships within the community and the roles of these teams expanded. The relationships within the communities allowed for expanded roles focused on dissemination of information and intelligence gathering.

What was the Impact of Previously Using Females to Combat Terrorism?

The fourth secondary research question, “What was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism?” was answered with a qualitative review and analysis of the literature reporting the results of leveraging females to combat terrorist organizations. Overall, incorporating females into counterterrorism operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has yielded success. However, the literature reporting this success is primarily anecdotal in nature. The Army has not made public any specified measures with which to measure the effectiveness of FETs and CSTs.

The success that was initially reported was tied to accessing and engaging the local population. Females had success with engaging both male and female members of the population. Additionally, females were successful at enabling operations by conducting searches and security related tasks. Because females were initially successful in the engagement of the local population, their role in the counterterrorism fight quickly expanded to include information dissemination and intelligence gathering. This expanded role provided information that was critical to the success of operations against terrorists in the region.

Criticisms of FETs and CST were not related to the ability to enable operations or gather and disseminate information. Instead there were criticisms of underutilization of these teams. Most of this appeared due to commander's lack of understanding of the capabilities provided by a female team. A lack of training and integration into U.S. military strategy has also been cited as significant contributing factors to the instances when the female teams have not been as effective as expected. Despite these few negative observations, the overall impact that the role FETs and CSTs has had to combat terrorism has been positive.

If the U.S. does Incorporate Females into its Strategy Against Boko Haram, What Impact Would That Have on the DoD?

The final secondary research question, "If the U.S. does incorporate females into its military strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on the DoD?" could not be sufficiently answered with a qualitative literature review. Therefore, an application of evaluation criteria is necessary to adequately answer this question. the third step in the research design is the application of a DOTMLPF-P based evaluation framework, based on the DOTMLPF-P framework. Application of the criteria in this framework will allow the researcher to sufficiently answer the final secondary research question.

Step 3: Application of the Evaluation Criteria

The third step in the research design is to apply a framework of evaluation criteria to assist in answering the final secondary research question: "If the U.S. does incorporate females into its military strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on

the DoD?” Four evaluation criteria were developed to assess the impact to DoD using the DOTMLPF-P construct as a basis.

The first of the evaluation criteria is an assessment of the impact that incorporating females into U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram will have on military doctrine. Doctrine describes how we fight (ACQuipedia 2016). Two Joint publications contain doctrine relevant to U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram: Joint Publication (JP) 3-26, *Counterterrorism*, JP 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*. Counterterrorism is defined as “activities and operations taken to neutralize terrorists and their organizations and networks in order to render them incapable of using violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies to achieve their goals” (Department of Defense 2016, 57). Counterinsurgency, also known as COIN, is defined as “comprehensive civilian and military efforts designed to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes” (Department of Defense 2016, 56).

Joint Publication 3-26 provides doctrine for the planning, execution, and assessment of counterterrorism operations (Department of Defense 2014b, i). It is established in this doctrine that a diverse coalition a sustained approach, and incorporation of COIN doctrinal elements is vital to successfully combating terrorism (Department of Defense 2014b, I-5 - I-6). The military’s role in counterterrorism efforts include intelligence operations, routine engagements to building trust and confidence with the local population, share information and influencing (Department of Defense 2014b, II-2). Throughout Joint Publication 3-26 there is no reference to the role women play in terrorist organizations or their supporting populations. Additionally, there are no

references for the specific need or use of females to engage and influence the female population as a part of counterterrorism operations.

Joint Publication 3-24 provides doctrine for COIN operations, typically used in conjunction with counterterrorism operations. The premise of COIN operations is a population-centric approach which requires an adaptive and flexible mindset when understanding the population (Department of Defense 2013, x-xi). The only specific reference to females in COIN doctrine comes in the form of an example provided of COIN qualification standards. This reference is to the qualification standard of training females for site exploitation and searches when conducting detainee operations. As found with JP 3-26, counterinsurgency doctrine contains no references to the specific need or use of females to engage and influence the female population as a part of counterterrorism operations.

A review of Army and Marine doctrine was conducted because both military services have previously incorporated women to combat terrorism. Army FM 3-24 serves as the COIN doctrine for both Army and Marines. Aligned with JP 3-24 and JP 3-26, Army FM 3-24 contains an acknowledgement of the role and influence women have in insurgent operations. The role women play is defined as essential in the insurgency's support element. It is noted that women tend to move about in society with less scrutiny so they are able to conduct financial transitions or information dissemination more freely than male members of the insurgency (Department of the Army 2014, 4-17). It is also noted that the population, which is the focus of COIN operations, may include women (Department of the Army 2014, 8-5). In terms of incorporation of women into the COIN

strategy there is only an acknowledgement that restricted access teams may aid in gathering information.

Current military doctrine describing counterterrorism and COIN operations focuses largely on winning the support of the population as the key to success. The influential role of women in supporting insurgent groups is directly acknowledged in Army doctrine, and is even termed essential in FM 3-24. However, any acknowledgement of this fact is conspicuously absent in Joint Doctrine. Additionally, the need for female counterinsurgents is not firmly established in military doctrine. There is only the mention of restricted access teams which may be helpful in engaging women. A restricted access team is not further defined and there is no direct guidance found in doctrine for how to incorporate women into counterinsurgency operations to engage and influence the female segment of the population.

Doctrine is the place where guidance for engagement of half the population in COIN and counterterrorism operations should be found (Anderson 2017). There appears to be a lack of focus and guidance pertaining to the role that women play in counterterrorism and COIN operations. Previous research has found that the lack of integration of females into U.S. doctrine has contributed to a less effective use of FETs (Cook 2015). In order to successfully integrate females to counter Boko Haram at a strategic level, incorporation and guidance for appropriate use of females in counterterrorism and COIN operations is necessary. This will result in a moderate impact to doctrine.

Table 2. DOTMLPF-P Evaluation Criteria-Doctrine			
Criteria	Minimal to no impact (1 point)	Moderate impact (2 points)	Significant impact (3 points)
1) Does incorporating females change our Doctrine?		X	

Source: Developed by author

The second of the evaluation criteria examines the impact that incorporating females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram has on our organization. Organization is how we organize to fight (ACQuipedia 2016). Previously, when females have been used to help combat terrorist organizations, they have taken on this new role without a change in military occupational specialty (MOS). For example, the Marine FETs all maintained their traditional support jobs, such as logistics or intelligence, and are only assigned to a team on a temporary basis (Mcloging and Sommers 2010). Currently, there is not a specific MOS used to identify those individuals who meet the qualifications, such as required training and physical fitness standards. Because there is no MOS, many females who function in these roles are viewed as extra soldiers performing an additional duty (Nicolas 2015, 58-59). The individuals can be assigned to units coded as over-strength. This can present some challenges when it comes to resourcing these teams (Nicolas 2015, 60).

Although there is no MOS, the Army does have additional skill identifiers (ASI) for those who have the necessary training as female enablers. Females who graduate from the cultural support program, which is the training for CST members, automatically receive an ASI (SORB 2013). Members of FETs may also be awarded an ASI, but the

application of the Army's FET ASI has reportedly lacked consistency and reliability (Nicolas 2015, 60).

There are several arguments for the establishment a specific MOS for females involved in FETs and CSTs. First, it would allow for complete integrate those women who have the required training, skill, and physical fitness requirements within a specific unit. Currently, the burden is placed on Brigades to produce these personnel from within their already stretched thin ranks (Nicolas 2015, 58). Second, inconsistent application of the ASI has led to challenges accurately capturing the contribution and skills of these female enables. As a result, it is reported that it is more challenging for career progression having served in these roles (Nicolas 2015, 60).

Per Army Human Resource Command, an Additional Skill Identifier is “used to identify skills requiring formal school training or civilian certification. Specialized skills identified by the ASI include operation and maintenance of specific weapon systems and subsystems, computer programming languages, procedures, analytical methods, animal handling techniques and similar required skills that are too restrictive in scope to comprise a MOS” (HRC 2017). The definition of an MOS differs for officer and enlisted personnel. A MOS for officers “provides the officer branch, functional area, immaterial, area of concentration, skill, language identification, and reporting classification used to classify officer positions, and to identify individuals qualified to perform in those positions. (Department of the Army 2007, 50).” For enlisted personnel, a MOS is “the grouping of duty positions requiring similar qualifications, and the performance of closely related duties” (Department of the Army 2007, 50).

Comparing the arguments for an MOS for females functioning in an enabler role with the definitions of what qualifies for an MOS the researcher's conclusion is that being part of an FET or CST does not qualify for an MOS. The training and functioning of those who participate falls under the category of being too restrictive for an MOS. If females were incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram, no significant change to organizational structure would result. The change needed would be to streamline the ASI process and quantification of expected contributions to eliminate previous challenges experienced with documentation and career progression.

Table 3. Evaluation Criteria-Organization			
Criteria	Minimal to no impact (1 point)	Moderate impact (2 points)	Significant impact (3 points)
2) Does incorporating females change our Organization?	X		

Source: Developed by author

The third of the evaluation criteria examines the impact that incorporating females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram has on training. Training is how we prepare to fight tactically (ACQuipedia 2016). Marine FETs, Army FETs and CSTs all received different training. However, there is a difference in the structure and organization of the training that members of each of these teams receives.

Previously FETs did receive training, but there was no formalized training program. In the absence of a training program, a train-the-training approach was adopted. In 2011, the Army made a FET training support package available on the Army Training

Network. This training includes sessions on culture, language, mission and organization of FETs. These topics are presented in a variety of training mediums including power point, lectures, online modules and practical exercises (Army Training Network 2017). The provision of this training revolves around a train the trainer concept. Deploying units have access to a training support package and were responsible for training their own team (Holliday 2012 90). The train the trainer concept and each unit's responsibility to train their team resulted in inconstant and lack of standardization of FET training (Holliday 2012, 91). This lack of consistent training coupled with a lack of understanding of the FET mission reportedly contributed to the underutilization of these teams (Mehra 2010, 25).

Cultural support team members received far more consistent training than their FET counterparts. Training is conducted in two phases at one location, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. This training is focused on the primary mission of these teams, which is to engage the local population. The first phase is a nine-day assessment and selection process. During this phase writing, problem solving capabilities and physical and psychological performance are assessed. These evaluations and assessments are used to determine if the candidate is suitable to attend further CST training. The second phase is a six-week course which includes training in the following areas: survivability, operational orientation, general and regional culture, engagement, and tactical information collection. The training includes classroom instruction and a comprehensive field exercise. Following successful completion of phase 2, individuals are assigned to a special operations unit in support of operations (SORB 2013).

Training for Marine FETs is more structured than the training for Army FETs. The Marine Corps have an in-resident training program (Holliday 2012, 91). Female engagement team members receive training on tactical infantry basics, law enforcement, reconnaissance, combat lifesaver basics, and cultural training tailored to the specific mission (Seck 2015). This training appears similar in nature to what is provided to the Army CST members.

There are clear differences in the quantity and quality of training that CSTs and FETs receive. To train most effectively, standardization of training and provision of in-resident training for these female enablers is critical. Because structured training already exists with the in-resident CST training, standardization of this training to all female enablers would require minimal resources. Therefore, if females were incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram, the impact to the DoD of training these females is assessed as minimal.

Table 4. Evaluation Criteria-Training			
Criteria	Minimal to no impact (1 point)	Moderate impact (2 points)	Significant impact (3 points)
3) Does incorporating females change our Training?	X		

Source: Developed by author

The fourth of the evaluation criteria examines the impact that incorporating females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram has on leadership. Leadership is how we prepare our leaders to lead the fight (ACQuipedia

2016). Leaders being prepared to effectively manage female enablers and integrate them into the fight has previously depended on the unit and the type of enabler.

In the Marines, the commander drives the employment of the FET (Bedell 2011, 6). The FET provides the commander with a capability to support operations concerning female populations in areas where gender considerations impact the mission (Beals 2010, 16). As a result of leaders understanding this capability, and willing to use it, marine FETs were adopted in the organization early on in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, the use of FETs was much more widespread in the Marines than the Army (Cook 2015).

With Army FETs it is up to each company commander to put together a team and train them as he sees fit (Brooke 2016). It has also been shown that early integration of Army FETs into the planning process has led to an improvement of the quality of the FET's contribution to the overall mission (Bedell 2011, 6). There has also been a previously reported lack of leader support (Cook 2015). This was thought to stem from a lack of understanding of FETs. To remedy this, in 2011 the Center for Army Lessons Learned published a Commanders Guide to FETs to provide leaders with guidance for the management of FETs.

Leaders of units with cultural support teams received females who had standardized training and a clear mission. The initial need and request for CSTs initially came from the leadership of joint special operations command. As a result, leader integration, support, and utilization of CSTs within the special operations units they were assigned was done relatively well (Lemmon 2015b).

To successfully incorporate females in the military strategy against Boko Haram, there are several key items that a leader must be aware of. First, it is important that

leaders integrate them into the planning process as early as possible. Second, stronger relationships between the female team and commander will also be beneficial for improved efficacy (Harding 2012, 18). There is already published guidance for how leaders can better engage and employ female teams with the Center for Army Lessons Learned “Commanders Guide to FETs.” Leaders should become familiar with this material to allow for effective integration and use of females as part of the military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Integration of female team leadership, developing stronger relationships with the team and using available resources for guidance as a leader are all leadership tasks that have little impact on the training and resources. Therefore, the impact of integrating females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram on leadership is assessed as minimal.

Table 5. DOTMLPF-P Evaluation Criteria-Leadership			
Criteria	Minimal to no impact (1 point)	Moderate impact (2 points)	Significant impact (3 points)
4) Does incorporating females change our Leadership?	X		

Source: Developed by author

Step 4: Answer Primary Research Question

Step 4 in the research methodology is to answer the primary research question. The answer to the primary research question is derived from the answers to the secondary research questions. The secondary research questions were answered using a qualitative

literature review and analysis and application of evaluation criteria. Below is an aggregation of the answers to the secondary research questions.

A qualitative literature review and analysis provided the following answers for the secondary research questions:

1. What is the U.S.'s current strategy to counter Boko Haram? The U.S.'s strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram is a multi-national and multi-agency effort centered on supporting the region by addressing the root causes of instability in the region to reduce the propensity for violent extremism. Females are not currently incorporated as part of this strategy.
2. What role do women have in the Boko Haram organization? Women's roles are expanding within the Boko Haram organization. Some women are forced into roles within the group, others are willing participants. These women actively participate in the fighting, recruiting and intelligence gathering for the group.
3. How have females previously been used to combat terrorist organizations like Boko Haram? Females have previously been used in teams with a range of missions from solely enabling units to overcome challenges present due to cultural norms to dissemination of information and intelligence gathering.
4. What was the impact of previously using females to combat terrorism? Overall, incorporating females into counterterrorism operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has yielded successes in enabling units and operations, gathering information, and influencing local populations.

5. If the U.S. does incorporate females into its military strategy against Boko Haram, what impact would that have on the DoD? Presented in Table XX is the consolidated results of the application of the DOTMLPF-P based evaluation criteria. Overall, the impact to the DoD would be minimal.

Table 6. Evaluation Criteria			
Criteria	Minimal to no impact (1 point)	Moderate impact (2 points)	Significant impact (3 points)
1) Does incorporating females change our Doctrine?		X	
2) Does incorporating females change our Organization?	X		
3) Does incorporating females change our Training?	X		
4) Does incorporating females change our Leadership?	X		
Total	3	2	0

Source: Developed by author

The overall application of the evaluation criteria establishes that there will be minimal impact to the DoD if females were incorporated into U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. Given the information from the literature review and analysis about the role women play in the Boko Haram organization, current U.S. strategy, and the benefit of previous use of females to counter organizations like Boko Haram, the answer to the primary research question is obvious. “Should females be

incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” The answer to this question is yes.

Step 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The final step in the research process is to draw conclusions from the data analysis. Based on these conclusions, recommendations to policy makers and recommendations for areas of future research are made. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in chapter 5.

Chapter Conclusion

Should the U.S incorporate females into its military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram? The answer is yes. A review and analysis of the literature shows that previous employment of has been successful in the counterterrorism fight, that this is not a current part of the current U.S. military strategy, and that the role within Boko Haram is rapidly expanding. In addition to this, the application of the evaluation criteria establishes that making this change to U.S. military strategy will result in a minimal impact given the already existing structure for training and incorporating these females. The analysis described above also revealed additional conclusions and recommendations for future research and policy makers described in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Introduction

Based on the above research, this study determined that the U.S. should incorporate females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. First, the legal authority of the U.S. to make such a change to its military strategy was established with a review of applicable laws. Second, further review and analysis of available literature provided answers to the secondary research questions. Evaluation criteria was developed and applied to answer an additional secondary research question. The answers to these secondary questions led to the answer of the primary research question “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” This answer is yes.

Conclusions

The U.S. should incorporate females into its military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. An analysis of available literature established the U.S.’s Legal authority to do so. A review and analysis of the literature provided the answers for the secondary research questions, and application of the evaluation criteria answered the final secondary questions. These answers provided the basis for the answer to the primary research question. The answer to “Should females be incorporated into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram?” based on this research is yes.

There may be some who would argue that another agency, instead of the DoD could provide females to engage the local female population, the results of this study

refute that argument. Military females, and not females belonging to an NGO, have an increased ability to access the female population because they are trained and able to operate where the security situation is volatile. Additionally, non-military females, if attached to an NGO or similar organization would have an expanded long term missions, such as eliminating conditions that contribute to the growth of terrorism in the region. If military females are incorporated, they can focus on enabling operations when culturally appropriate, information dissemination and intelligence gathering. This directly aligns with the U.S. current strategy of providing security training programs, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and support to the region affected by Boko Haram.

There will be some challenges, as seen in the past, when incorporating females into the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. First, leader support in the past has been an issue. To ensure this is mitigated it is important to have all relevant materials such as the Center for Army Lessons Learned handbook available for leaders as well as a clear understanding of the mission and capabilities that the female enablers bring to the operations. Second, training of females has been inconsistent in the past and it is important that training be standardized. This continuity will allow leaders to integrate females into operations more effectively and improve the success of operations involving female enablers.

Recommendations

Recommendations for decision makers: When the U.S. military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram is being reviewed, it is recommended that trained military females be incorporated as part of this strategy. Additionally, it is recommended that guidance for the use of the specific capabilities that females bring to COIN and

counterterrorism operation be incorporated into U.S. doctrine. This will more appropriately align capabilities with the threats that are described in COIN doctrine. Standardization of training is also recommended for these females, with the cultural component of the training being adjusted based on mission requirements. Inclusion of females into the doctrine and standardization of training will enable leaders in AFRICOM to integrate females into the military strategy more effectively and efficiently to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

Recommendations to future researchers: There are two areas identified for future research. The first is how best to standardize the training of female enablers for future employment in counterterrorism and COIN operations. Currently there are three configurations which are trained separately: Marine FETs, Army FETs, and CSTs. Because the Army and Marines share the same COIN doctrine it would be beneficial to simplify the make-up, training, and employment of these teams. Instead of three separate training and missions, standardization of training, missions, and team construct would allow for leaders to employ these teams in the future more effectively. The second area for future research is

Final Thoughts

The contributions and specific capabilities that women bring to the military have recently come to the forefront of our nation's social and political dialogue. When commencing this study, the researcher was unsure that the specific addition of females would have a significant impact to justify the change to the U. S.'s military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram. However, after reviewing previous employment of females to engage local populations and combat terrorist organizations, the researcher is

convinced that incorporation of females into the U.S. military strategy would provide a significant benefit in the fight against Boko Haram. When considering threats to U.S. national security, terrorist organizations must always be considered adversarial. There can be no other conclusion than that the U.S. should incorporate females into the military strategy to contain and degrade Boko Haram.

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